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LIBRARIES IN ISRAEL

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KEY WORDS: National Library. Academic libraries. Public libraries. School libraries. Libraries in Israel.

ABSTRACT: **Thesis/Objective** – This article provides background on Israeli society and on Jewish culture, on the basis of which the development of libraries in the State of Israel is examined. A review is provided on the various types of library: the national library, academic libraries, public libraries, and school libraries in the Jewish and Arab sectors. In addition, the institutes of professional education and the central bodies in the field are detailed: the professional organizations and the bodies of interlibrary collaborations. **Research methods** – literature review and content analysis. **Results/Conclusions** – The review presented in this paper regarded libraries both in the period preceding the proclamation of the independent state of Israel (although in brief, as a background to later developments) and from the proclamation of the state (1948) until today. This is one of the many chapters in the story of the Israeli-Jewish society, which strove to establish institutes of education and culture even before it became an independent society – and certainly afterwards.

INTRODUCTION

After the failure of the rebellion against the Romans and the fall of Jerusalem in 70 C.E., many Jews were dispersed to foreign lands and only a few remained in *Eretz Yisrael* (The Land of Israel), living under rulers who changed several times over the centuries. From 1517 until 1917, Eretz Yisrael was part of the Ottoman Empire. Following the First World War, Britain was granted from the League of Nations a mandate to rule in Eretz Yisrael, which continued until 15 May 1948, when the establishment of the independent State of Israel was proclaimed.

Modern Israel is a country that absorbs Jewish immigrants. It developed primarily through five waves of pre-State immigration, which brought some 450,000 immigrants to Israel from 1882 to 1948 and a mass immigration from the Arab countries and Eastern Europe after the Holocaust and the establishment of the State of Israel. The Jewish population has grown from 649,000 in 1948 to 6,377,000 in May 2016 (Israel. Central Bureau of Statistics, 9.5.2016). The Arab sector in Israel numbers 1,771,000 people, who are 20.8% of Israel's population. There are also 374,000 other non-Jewish citizens (4.4%) living in Israel.

This article will survey the development of libraries in the State of Israel and present a current portrait of this cultural institution.

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

During the years when there was no autonomous Jewish rule in Eretz Yisrael, libraries existed in synagogues and study houses (*Beitei Midrash*), as well as private collections.

Ben-Yehoyada (1 October 1944) mentions the concern throughout the ages of the Jews of Eretz Yisrael towards books, and the Talmud Bavli* mentions that books are not to be taken out of Eretz Yisrael. Numerous books were preserved and concentrated in the holy cities of Israel, thanks to the regulation made in antiquity by the Sephardic elders of Jerusalem: „A book that is found in Eretz Yisrael, whether in print or handwritten… must not be taken outside the Land", and some added that „not only that, but also from Jerusalem to Eretz Yisrael – it is prohibited" (p. 8). There is evidence from the 17th and 18th centuries of valuable books, including first prints and manuscripts, in private collections and in collections of religious, Talmudic Colleges in Jerusalem (Benayahu, 1 October 1944).

In the 19th century, non-Jewish communities also maintained libraries in Eretz Yisrael, mainly in Jerusalem. These were owned by foreign institutions and mainly contained books about Eretz Yisrael for the use of archeologists, historians, and tourists. There were also theological collections and devotional literature in monastery and church libraries.

During the years when there was no autonomous Jewish rule in Eretz Yisrael, libraries existed in synagogues and study houses (*Beitei Midrash*), as well as private collections. The first library in Eretz Yisrael to include secular literature was established by Albert Cohen, the manager of James Edmond De Rothschild's philanthropic funds, in the first Jewish hospital in Jerusalem in 1854, which received a delivery of books in several languages from Paris. The library provided books to the patients of the hospital, as well as to nearby residents.

The last quarter of the 19th century saw the opening of the first secular public libraries in Jerusalem (the Montefiore Book Collection in 1874), Rishon Lezion (1883), Jaffa (1886), Safed (1891), *Sha'ar Zion* Library in Jaffa (1891), the Abravanel House Library in Jerusalem in 1892 (which later became the National Library), Petah Tikva (1892), Zichron Yaacov (1895), Hadera (1899), and Sejera (1902) (Schidorsky, 1990). During the period of the British Mandate, there was not one Jewish town or village in the Land of Israel that did not have a library of some type, although many were unable to maintain an uninterrupted existence (Schidorsky, 1998).

These libraries were established, first and foremost, because the ideology of the Jewish national revival movement strove, among other things, to create a society with modern goals for education and cultural creativity. Other contributing factors were: the tradition of study and the unique status of books in Jewish culture; the Enlightenment Movement, which led to the development of cultural and educational institutions; and the establishment of Hebrew newspapers. Indeed, the founders of many libraries in Israel were teachers and groups of educated people (Shoham, 2000).

The 19th century also saw, for the first time, the establishment of libraries as part of educational institutions, though some of these also served the general public. In 1870, the first agricultural school, Mikve Israel, was founded, including a library. The library started with 300 volumes and grew to approximately 3,000 by the end of the century. Most books in this library were in French, and about half were about agriculture (Schidorsky, 1990).

During the 1890s, school libraries were set up in Petah Tikva, Gedera and Sejera. The collections in these school libraries reflected the education that the schools provided and the educational trends at that time. They generally included religious literature and, sometimes, secular Hebrew literature. In some libraries, French literature was also included.

The General Federation of Labor of the Hebrew Workers in Eretz Yisrael, or *Histadrut*, partially compensated for the lack of the autonomous municipal governments that were responsible for the establishment of public libraries throughout the Western world. The *Histadrut* concerned itself not only with workers' interests but also with the provision of culture, and regarded libraries as a basic component of social, educational and cultural life. Among other things, the *Histadrut* set up workers' libraries in many

urban communities, mainly beginning in the 1920s and 1930s. Earlier instances of this phenomenon involved small workers' associations that set up small "workers' clubs" and "reading rooms" in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

The foundations of the development of libraries designated for laborers in Eretz Yisrael are related to the influence of the Russian intellectual movement at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th centuries, which strove to establish a movement of young intellectuals by establishing „study circles" and libraries, in parallel to establishing Jewish workers' libraries in Eastern Europe. Secret libraries dedicated to distributing socialist literature began to rise in Jewish centers in Eastern Europe already during the 1870s (Schidorsky, 1988). The first libraries for laborers in Israel were established in the cities of Rishon LeZion (in 1887) and Petah Tikva (in 1904 or 1905).

THE NATIONAL LIBRARY

In 1892, the Jerusalem bureau of the B'nai B'rith** organization set up the Abravanel House Library. This library initially contained *belles lettres* as well as theoretical and scientific literature and soon adopted the goal of amassing *all* Hebrew works and materials pertaining to the Jews of Eretz Yisrael, some of which had also been published in foreign languages. Hence it gave priority to books on Judaism and rare books, and issued appeals to Diaspora Jewry to establish depositories for the books of the Jewish people.

It was thus, at the initiative of a few individuals, that the nucleus of the National Library of Israel was formed. The first to call for the creation of a national library that would amass books in the areas of Judaism and the Land of Israel came from Rabbi Yehoshua Heschel Levine of Volozhin, whose article on the topic appeared in the Jerusalem periodical *Havatzelet* in 1872. The Hibbat Zion*** movement in Odessa also advocated the creation of a national library. Among those active in this connection was a Hibbat Zion member Dr. Joseph Chazanowicz of Bialystok, who, after visiting Eretz Yisrael in 1890, decided to devote his life to collecting books. During thirty years of activity he collected 16,000 books, many of them rare, and transferred them to the Abravanel House Library (Schidorsky, 2006).

In 1920, the library was acquired by the World Zionist Organization**** and, for the first time, a professional librarian, Dr. Shmuel Hugo Bergmann, was appointed as its director (Schidorsky, 1995). In 1925 with the establishment of the Hebrew University, the first university in Eretz Yisrael, it was decided that the library would serve as a national and university library. The library also served as a public library, open to all, thus filling a void that had previously existed in Mandatory Eretz Yisrael.

From 1925, the Jewish National and University Library served a threefold purpose; it was the national library of the State of Israel, the national libra-

ry of the Jewish people, and the central library of the Hebrew University. However, this situation has changed with the passing of the National Library Law on 16 November 2007, which established the National Library as an organizationally and financially independent body.

In 1930, the library moved to Mount Scopus – the residence of the Hebrew University – but, in 1948, as a result of the Israeli War of Independence, Mount Scopus was besieged by the Jordanians and the library's books were scattered in different buildings around the city. In 1960, a new building of the National Library was opened on Givat Ram, where it is still located today. On 5 April 2016, the cornerstone of a new and modern library building was laid.

The national library serves as a depository for all books published in Israel. In 1953, the first legislation was passed requiring that a copy of all publications be submitted to the National Archive, to the Knesset (parliament) Library and the National Library. In 2000, the law was expanded to include publications that are not printed on paper. The library collects material about Israel, the Jewish people, and Judaism, as well as material written in Hebrew script and in other Jewish languages (Yiddish, Ladino, etc.) from every place and time. In addition, it has collections of rare Judaica and Hebraica, manuscripts and incunabula amassed from all corners of the world. The library also contains one of the largest and best-organized collections on Arab and Islamic subjects in the Middle East.

The library contains over five million books and periodicals, as well as many thousands of items in special collections, such as manuscripts and archives, maps, and music recordings. Most of the collections are in closed stacks, while approximately 250,000 items are on open shelves in eight reading rooms. The library also has about eleven thousand manuscripts, nine thousand of them in Hebrew and the rest in Arabic. The library's Paleography Project is conducting research on the codicology and paleography of dated medieval Hebrew manuscripts. The library also houses the Institute of Microfilmed Hebrew Manuscripts, which has undertaken to collect microfilm copies of all Hebrew manuscripts extant in public and private collections. Over sixty thousand items, representing 90% of known Hebrew manuscripts, are already available to scholars.

Among the library's special collections are the Depository Collection of the United Nations, which contains publications of the United Nations and documents of the League of Nations; the European Union Depository Collection; and an additional digital library section, which contains thousands of scanned books, manuscripts, newspapers, maps, and music archives.

The National Library publishes the *National Bibliography* (*Kiryat Sefer*), an annotated bibliography that contains entries for all works on Israel, Jews and Judaica, published in Israel and abroad. Until 2003, the bibliography was published as a printed journal, sold only to subscribers; however, since

then, the material is found in an online and daily updated database, which is openly and freely available to the public.

The library also publishes the bibliography of periodical literature called *Index of Articles on Jewish Studies (RAMBI)*. It was founded by Dr. Issachar Joel in 1966. This is a selective list of articles in various fields of Jewish studies and the study of Eretz Israel and the State of Israel. RAMBI is based largely on the collections of the National Library. The articles listed in RAMBI are collected from thousands of journals – whether in print or electronically, and from collections of articles, in Hebrew letters, Latin or Cyrillic – and of reprints which are sent by the researchers. The database is updated on a daily basis.

Another research tool prepared by the library is a retrospective bibliography of books printed in Hebrew characters, *The Bibliography of Hebrew Books, 1472-1960.* The library also provides on-line links to two other indexes: *The Index to Hebrew Periodicals* and the *Index to Hebrew Israeli Newspapers*, which are prepared by other Israeli libraries. The library carries a digitalization project, which includes making the library's collection of Jewish marriage certificates, manuscripts of the Mishna and Talmud, ancient maps of Jerusalem, official records of Jewish communities, the Einstein archive and historical Jewish and Israeli newspapers, etc. available to all on its Internet site: <http://web.nli.org.il/sites/nli/hebrew/pages/default.aspx/>.

ACADEMIC LIBRARIES

When the State of Israel was proclaimed in 1948, it had two academic institutions: the Technion – Israel Institute of Technology, founded in Haifa in 1924, and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, established in 1925, on Mount Scopus. Since then, seven additional universities have been established: The Weizmann Institute of Science (1949), the Tel Aviv University (1953), the Bar-Ilan University (1955), the University of Haifa (1963), the Ben-Gurion University of the Negev (1966), the Open University (for distance education, 1976), and the Ariel University (which was established as a college in 1982 and was recently granted a university status). Today there are also thirty-one academic and regional colleges, including some private institutions, and twenty-eight teachers' training colleges. In recent years many colleges have been upgraded and have begun to grant academic degrees.

The Israeli universities do not use a uniform library model. Whereas the University of Haifa and the Ben-Gurion University have one central library, other universities, for example, the Bar-Ilan University and the Technion, have many departmental libraries. Others, like the Hebrew University, also have large faculty libraries.

In 1948, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem was cut off by the war from its campus on Mt Scopus. Some of the library's books were salvaged and

brought down in the truck convoys to temporary quarters in Jerusalem, many were lost, and the library had to rebuild its collections. Today, the central library and its branch libraries serve students, faculty, and staff on four campuses: Givat Ram, which was completed in 1958; Mt Scopus, reopened in 1967; Ein Kerem, which includes the medical, dental, nursing, and pharmaceutical branches of the university; and the Library of Agriculture, Food, and Environment, in Rehovot (Katz, 1980).

Interuniversity Cooperation

In 1969, the government established the Israeli Standing Committee of the National and University Libraries (SCONUL), a voluntary forum for discussing problems of policy and planning. SCONUL initiated an interlibrary loan system among the universities and set up a group of committees to deal with cataloging, acquisition, reference, periodicals and circulation.

In 1979, the Hebrew University developed a library automation system (ALEPH) that was adopted as the software program of the university libraries in Israel. The Grants Committee of the Israel Council of Higher Education has also contributed to this by subsidizing the university libraries' participation in ALEPH. Today, all the catalogs of the universities and the majority of the colleges in Israel are in the ALEPH network. The *Israel National Catalog* currently lists over 12 million books, periodicals, and audiovisual items in 50 university, college, and specialty libraries (Information from the Library). The catalog uses MARC format and ALEPH-500 software.

In 1998, the Committee of University Heads established a consortium framework, the Inter-University Center for Digital Information Services (MALMAD) (Adler, 1999). MALMAD's main functions are the acquisition, licensing, and operation of information services for all the Israeli universities. It makes databases, directories, and digital journals available to universities and colleges in Israel.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Beginning in the 19th century, libraries were created in the Jewish settlements in Eretz Yisrael – most of which were public libraries. The major role of the library was to assist in establishing social norms in the Jewish settlement, thereby contributing to its existence. From their beginning, the libraries were given specific roles that touched upon the fundamental issues of the settlement society in Eretz Yisrael, such as supporting and assisting the realization of the national vision, pursuing the renaissance of the Hebrew language and of the national culture, and forming that generation in the spirit of the Avoda (Labor) movement, while spreading its ideology.

In the 1960s, just 15 years after the establishment of the State of Israel, there was an attempt to change the educational system in order to promote social equality and integration in the new society, which included immigrants from various cultures. In this context, the government began to address the issue of public libraries.

In 1962, a Library Section was created in the Ministry of Education for the purpose of establishing new public libraries, which more than half of the communities lacked. Furthermore, few of the existing libraries met the criteria for proper service in terms of collections, opening hours and staffing. This governmental section had its influence on the situation; whereas, in 1963, there were 462 public libraries in Israel, the number grew to 561 in 1966 and to 680 libraries in 2015 (a library is counted only if it is open at least 8 hours per week and at least twice a week).

In 1975, the Knesset (parliament) passed the Libraries Law which did not mandate the establishment of a public library in every town but did set criteria for recognizing a library as "public" and the resultant eligibility for some degree of funding from the national budget. The law also established the Council for Public Libraries, which advises the minister of culture regarding implementation of the law and submits its own proposals to him/her.

When the development of the libraries began, there was a gradual but steady increase in the percentage of registered readers using public libraries. In 1985, 25% of all residents of the state were registered in libraries. Since that time, there has been an ongoing, gradual decline in the number of readers, and in 2013 approximately 21% of residents are registered in public libraries. In 2015, all Israeli public libraries together circulated 12,144,587 million items (compared to 8.2 million in 2006) and 1,942,338 million users visited their reference rooms (compared to 2.3 million in 2006) (Information from the Department of Libraries, Ministry of Science, Culture and Sport). There are 215 administrative library units in Israel, which together encompass 680 service points (including all branches). The library units include 45 regional libraries and fifty urban units located in community centers. Another 120 have a double function, serving as both regional and school libraries; of these, eighty libraries operate in elementary schools and forty in high schools. The regional libraries, which were first established in the 1960s, have lately been transformed to a new organizational concept, adopted in 2006. Instead of having a small library in every town or village, larger libraries are being formed to serve several communities, alongside central libraries that serve not only the public but also an educational institution.

A vast majority of the libraries' current collections are in Hebrew, even though Israel is an immigrant society. For many years, a melting-pot conception of immigration prevailed in Israel. A survey done in 1980 found that only 11% of all the collections in the public libraries included mate-

rials in foreign languages, and most of it was not in dynamic collections (Shoham, 1988).

During the 1990s, a different concept of immigration developed in Israeli society and it came to be understood that immigrants have an inner need to preserve their mother-tongue and cultural heritage. In the library field, this was manifested in a greater emphasis on materials in languages spoken by the immigrants living in a given community. To aid the libraries in this regard, a central library for Russian was set up in 1989 to provide libraries throughout the country with long-term loans of books in Russian. There are also central libraries for books in French, established in 1986, and Spanish, established in 2003.

Only a few libraries have audio or video collections. Since the beginning of the 21st century, libraries have begun to make computers available to the public, offering multimedia materials, games, and access to the Internet. Currently, computer stations are available in most libraries.

Funding of the Israeli public libraries is the responsibility of the local governments, which determine their budgets, and there are substantial differences in amounts allocated by the different local authorities. In addition, the libraries receive some support from the Ministry of Culture, although the proportion of the budget allocated to public libraries has declined over the years to about 10% of the total budget of the libraries. On July 16, 2007, the Knesset passed a law that set a scale for a gradual increase in the State's budgetary allocation for the libraries, beginning in 2008. By 2015, the State is funding half of the libraries' budgets.

Over the past 25 years, 70% of libraries in the urban communities have resorted to collecting fees for subscriptions to lending services. This source constitutes 5% of the libraries' budget. The new law makes receiving the higher allocation conditional on discontinuing the collection of subscription fees. And indeed most of the libraries stop collecting fees as of January 2008.

The Israeli Center for Libraries

In the 1960s, a decision was made to learn from the Scandinavian model of a public library system. This led, in 1965, to the creation of the Israeli Center for Libraries that provides central services to the libraries. Since 1966, the Center has provided central cataloging services to public and school libraries in Israel (now in electronic form), a service that was founded in 1963 by the Israel Library Association and was taken over in 1966 by the Centre (Rothschild, 1974). The Center publishes professional literature and tools for librarianship, it also offers an array of courses, training, and organizes annual conferences. It serves as the Israeli representative of ISBN, provides consultancy services to libraries on the management, architecture, equipping and furnishing of libraries, as well as supplying products and services for reading promotion.

SCHOOL LIBRARIES

During the first years of its existence, Israel absorbed massive waves of immigration, and the focus in those years was on the establishment of a school system. For a long period, many schools had only a small number of books or small library collections. Only in the 1970s, with the increased awareness of the importance of school libraries, did the creation of school libraries begin.

In 1988, the Department of Libraries of the Ministry of Education and Culture assumed responsibility for dealing with school libraries and this led to the intensified cultivation of existing libraries and the establishment of new libraries in the schools that still lacked them. This activity has been assigned to the Ministry of Education in 2000.

Today, 90% of high schools and 85% of elementary schools in Israel possess functioning libraries. Since the early 1990s, the concept of the library as a „resource center" has developed and there has been a countrywide effort to make the libraries into resource centers.

Today, there are a total of 2,988 elementary schools in Israel (in the educational streams of all sectors) and 1,893 high schools (information from supervisor of the school libraries in the Department of Education). Currently, 15% percent of the elementary schools still lack libraries, as do 10% of the high schools. Undoubtedly, the situation of the high school libraries is better than that of the elementary school libraries, although more books are lent for free reading in the elementary schools reflecting the decline in reading as students get older and the greater emphasis that elementary schools place on reading promotion.

The Ministry of Education's regulations require that there be a librarian in every high school but not in every elementary school. Therefore, elementary school principals can decide whether or not there will be a librarian in their school and what the scope of the librarian's activities will be.

SPECIAL LIBRARIES

In Israel there are approximately six hundred special libraries operated by government agencies, institutes and research centers, hospitals, museums, banks, corporations and enterprises.

One of them is the library of the Israeli parliament, ***Library of the Knesset***, which began to operate in 1950. Its main role is to serve the members of Knesset and support the legislative process.

According to the Law of Legal Deposit (1953), the library receives one copy of each book published in Israel (in the past, libraries received two copies of each book, but the Law was changed in 2001 to include only one copy). The library pays 25% of the retail price for these books. The Library of the Knesset does not receive children's books or recreation literature.

The fields covered in the Library of the Knesset include: law and justice in Israel, parliamentarism, policy and governance in Israel and abroad, general history since the 20th century, Jewish and Israeli history, economics, society and education in Israel and abroad, Islam and Christianity, Hebrew literature, and translated foreign literature. In addition, the library holds an archive of local journalism since the days of the establishment of the State. The library includes a reading room, which houses all Knesset materials in print (although these also exist in electronic form), all Knesset legislations, books on Judaism, and a unique collection of all books written by members of the Knesset and of books written about them. The reading room also provides all daily Israeli newspapers for the members of the Knesset.

However, the vast majority of the library's collection is archived in a compactus, and those seeking items need to request them from the librarians. In 1973, the library established an Information Center, with the role of looking for information on various subjects at the request of Members of Knesset and the various Knesset Committees and bureaus. This Center did not fulfill its objective, and in the year 2000, at the initiative of Avraham Burg – then, the Speaker of the Knesset – a Center was established according to the model of the American Congress. The Center consisted of two departments: an information department and a research department, which were united in 2006 to form the Research and Information Center. The Center currently employs 36 workers and aims to provide the members and committees of the Knesset with reliable and well-founded information and research according to their requests. The workers in the Center are divided into four teams, three of which are multidisciplinary (although each of these teams focuses on working with certain committees, to establish specialty) and the fourth deals with budgetary issues (http://www.knesset.gov.il/mmm/heb/index.asp).

Medical libraries are a prominent group of special libraries. At present, there are approximately 80 medical libraries in Israel of various kinds. Israel has five medical schools (at the Hebrew University, the Tel Aviv University, the Technion, the Ben-Gurion University, and the Bar Ilan University – at its Safed Campus), each with its own large medical library. In addition, all hospitals have medical libraries, some are large but others employ only one person.

The Berman Medical Library of the Hebrew University–Hadassah Medical Center School (Ein Karem, Jerusalem) serves research staff and students of the Faculties of medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, nursing, public health, and occupational therapy, and the clinical academic staff in the hospital. It has the largest medical and paramedical collection in Israel, including approximately 60,000 book titles and 5,000 periodical titles. Being the largest

collection of its kind, it supplies interlibrary loan services to approximately 80 academic, research, public, and private medical institutions throughout the country. The library benefits from the cooperative purchase of electronic journals via the Consortium of Israeli Universities (Malmad) through the Hebrew University Library Authority, such that users have access to approximately 7,000 current electronic journals in the fields of medicine, health sciences, and life sciences. The Medical Library of the Hebrew University cooperates with other medical libraries in a national forum, which organizes an annual conference. The library participates in national committees that deal with various aspects, such as reference, inter-library loaning, cataloging, and acquisition.

The Medical Library of Tel Aviv University brings together a consortium of 8 libraries, including 7 hospital libraries with which the medical school collaborates. The main activities of the consortium include the cooperated acquisition of electronic resources, providing the seven hospital libraries with access to academic library resources, and co-organizing instructions and workshops.

Another special library is that of the Standards Institution of Israel, which has an extensive standards and technical documentation library, where the Israeli standards and specifications are collected in a database. There is also a collection of about 400,000 foreign standardization documents, including international standards, as well as guidebooks and periodicals in the field.

THE ARAB SECTOR

The Arab sector accounts for 20% of the population. They live in 123 settlements and consist of five different groups: Moslem Arabs (58%), Moslem Bedouins (15.4%), Christian Arabs (15%), Druze (8.8%), and Circassians (2.8%). Eight mixed towns or cities are home to 35% of the Arab population while the remainder lives in exclusively minority towns (88) and villages (35).

Academic and Research Libraries

Five universities, the University of Haifa, the Hebrew University, the Tel Aviv University, the Ben-Gurion University and the Bar-Ilan University, offer studies in Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies and Arabic language and literature. Each of these universities maintains large academic collections of literature and books in Arabic to serve the academic departments.

The University of Haifa has a large Arab student population and its library is used by Arab teachers and high school students in the region. Therefore, it has a policy of building a more comprehensive collection of Arabic books on all subjects (Sever & Sever, 1997). It also has a collection of children's literature in Arabic.

Israel also has three colleges for training Arab teachers: the Academic

Center for Training Arab Teachers (part of Beit Berl College), the Arab College in Haifa, and the Islamic College in Baka al-Garbia. Each of these has a library that provides resources for instruction.

Not many books in Arabic are published in Israel, a small amount of fiction and a few scholarly works. Therefore, the librarians have to travel to the annual book fair in Cairo, where they can order books that have been published in Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Morocco.

There are also research institutes in related fields, among the better-known ones being the Harry S. Truman Research Institute for the Advancement of Peace (Hebrew University of Jerusalem) and the Moshe Dayan Center for Middle Eastern and African Studies (Tel Aviv University), both of which maintain collections of books, periodicals and daily newspapers from Israel, the West Bank, and Arab countries.

There are other institutions in Israel that, though not part of universities, conduct research on the Middle East and maintain collections in Arabic. These include the Givat Haviva Institute for Advanced Studies, which includes the Jewish-Arab Center for Peace, which houses an information center with several dozen items in the field of Middle East studies, including files of newspaper articles published in Israel and various Arab countries, etc. Use of this collection, which offers items in Arabic as well as Hebrew and English, is open to all, but it is used mostly by lecturers, doctoral candidates, college students and high school students working on term papers, including many students from the nearby Arab settlements of Wadi Ara.

Public Libraries

During the Mandatory period there were no public libraries for Arabs. Until Israeli educational patterns began to influence the Arab sector, religious organizations played an important role in promoting reading and libraries among the literate elite of this sector. The Moslem Religious Endowment (*waqf*) still maintains two libraries, in Jerusalem and Jaffa. Their collections consist mainly of Moslem religious and legal literature (Sever & Sever, 1997).

In the Arab sector, too, the *Histadrut* played an important role during the pre-State era and the two first decades of statehood. The Arab Department of the *Histadrut* established 47 clubs in Arab villages of the Galilee and central Israel, each containing 500 to 3,000 library items.

After 1948, the Arab libraries were almost exclusively initiated and operated by Jewish authorities, mixed municipalities, the *Histadrut*, the Prime Minister's Office, the Department of Libraries of the Ministry of Education and Culture, and other Jewish and Arab organizations.

The development of modern libraries by the Arab community itself began in the 1970s. This reflected social, political, and educational changes that encouraged the creation of library services in the Arab and Druze sectors. During the 1960s, the Ministry of Interior encouraged the development of municipal

self-rule in Arab communities and they began to change. A vast improvement in Israeli communication and transportation systems gave Arab villages access to neighboring urban centers. The combination of high population growth and high unemployment impelled the younger generation to seek employment outside the villages. There was also a growth of light industry and commerce in the villages, in addition to agriculture. Young people went to universities, and new political power centers began to develop in the villages.

Today, there are 56 independent public libraries in the Arab settlements, twelve libraries that are branches of regional libraries and five libraries in mixed settlements. Seventeen Arab towns still do not have libraries. About one-third of the libraries in the Arab sector are located in schools and serve as combined libraries. Indeed, most of the library users in the Arab sector are children and teenagers.

School Libraries

Before the British Mandate, there were only a few Arab schools in Eretz Yisrael, supervised by the Turkish Ministry of Education. The British authorities regarded the educational advancement of the Arabs in Eretz Yisrael as an important goal. The public school system was designed mainly for the Moslems, while Christians had missionary schools. The British Mandate's efforts, however, lagged behind the Arab population's growth rate, so that many children did not attend school (Nebenzahl, 1998).

The Compulsory Education Act of 1949 obligated parents to enroll children in school and led to a great improvement in the Arab sector's educational level. In Israel today, there are 417 Arab elementary schools and 202 Arab high schools. Recent years have seen an impressive growth in the number of school libraries in the Arab sector, reflecting the increased awareness among the school administrators, especially in the Druze sector. At present, 70% of the elementary schools have a library and 84% of the high schools. Their collections are smaller than those in the Jewish sector because most Arab libraries were established more recently and have not yet acquired a large stock of books. In addition, they tend to limit their collections to material directly related to the curriculum and do not purchase many fiction books. Moreover, it is difficult to obtain material in Arabic, since it must be ordered from foreign countries. Most is ordered from Egypt or Jordan (this is also affected by the political situation in the region). Most of the collections in these libraries are in Arabic (71%-83%), with only a small proportion in Hebrew.

PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

Until the first school of librarianship was established in Israel in 1956, an Israeli could only become a professional librarian by going to Europe or the United States for training. Under the directorship of Shmuel Hugo

Bergmann (1920-1935), the National Library sent staff members abroad for training and sometimes employed immigrant librarians who had been trained in their home countries. During 1936-1947, the library profession came to be regarded differently. Fewer people went abroad for training, instead receiving short courses at the workplace as well as on-the-job training (Sever & Sever, 1997).

In 1956, the first library school was set up as an academic department at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, the School of Library, Archive and Information Studies, which was closed 50 years later.

In 1973, the Department of Library and Information Studies was inaugurated at the University of Haifa, where training courses had been provided since 1971. Today, this is a small department that offers a postgraduate diploma as well as a librarianship track within the framework of a general B. A. In 2011, a new track was opened in the Haifa University Faculty of Management – M.A. and Ph.D. in the Department of Information and Knowledge Management.

In 1974, the Bar-Ilan University opened a department of librarianship, known since 1999 as the Department of Information Science, which has become the largest department in Israel, offering B.A., M.A., and Ph.D. degrees. The areas of specialization it offers are: for the M.A. degree: Information and knowledge management in organizations and society; Information Technology. B.A.: Web Technologies; Information studies. Currently, the school is part of the prestigious iSchool organization, which is an international consortium of Information Schools, dedicated to advancing the field of information.

In addition, there are three teachers' colleges that offer non-academic programs in Librarianship and Information Studies: the Beit Berl College (Kfar Saba), the Oranim College (Tiv'on), and the David Yellin College of Education (Jerusalem). The David Yellin College of Education began, five years ago, to offer a second degree (M.Ed) in Information and Library Studies for librarians in educational institutions.

There were two relevant professional organizations. The Organization of Israeli Librarians was set up in 1952, and its members were mostly librarians of public and school libraries. The Association of Special Libraries and Information Centers in Israel (ASMI) was founded in 1966, and mainly encompasses academic librarians, special librarians and the professional staff of Information centers. These two professional organizations were merged a few years ago.

CONCLUSIONS

This review presented in this paper regarded libraries both in the period preceding the proclamation of the independent state of Israel (although in brief, as a background to later developments) and from the proclamation

of the state (1948) until today. This is one of the many chapters in the story of the Israeli-Jewish society, which strove to establish institutes of education and culture even before it became an independent society – and certainly afterwards.

During the periods of the Ottoman rule and the British Mandate over *Eretz Yisrael*, authorities neither encouraged nor supported strong local authorities and the establishment of educational and cultural institutes. Nevertheless, the Jewish settlement in *Eretz Israel* began acting also in these areas; these activities were extended after receiving the governmental sovereignty and the proclamation of the independent state.

During the 1960s, after the Israeli War of Independence was over and the process of accepting millions of refugees from the Holocaust and from Arab countries was concluded, Israelis had the time to establish modern public libraries across the country. Later, they also began encouraging and fostering the establishment of school libraries.

Institutes of higher education have possessed collections for researchers and students since the years preceding the proclamation of the state and afterwards, in the numerous universities and colleges that were established throughout the years. Notably, the national library was established already during the British Mandate – years before the establishment of the state of Israel – and the idea of collecting materials suitable for a national library was initiated by individuals years earlier, at the end of the 19th century.

NOTES

* **Talmud Bavli** – The **Talmud** *(talmūd* = instruction, learning) is a central text of Rabbinic Judaism. The Talmud has two components: the Mishnah (c. 200 CE), which is a written compendium of Rabbinic Judaism's Oral Torah, and the Gemara (c. 500 CE), which is an elucidation of the Mishnah and related Tannaitic writings that often venture onto other subjects and expound broadly on the Hebrew Bible.

** The B'nai B'rith organization was founded in October 1843 in New York City by 12 recent German Jewish immigrants, in an attempt to organize Jews of the local community to confront the deplorable conditions of Jews in the USA – their newly adopted country. It became an international Jewish organization that advances human rights, education, and social wellbeing of Jews worldwide, as well as an Israel advocacy. The first bureau in *Eretz Yisrael* was founded in Jerusalem, in 1888.

*** **Hibbat Zion** – (lit. *[Those who are] Lovers of Zion*), also known as **Hovevei Zion,** refers to a variety of organizations that were first established in 1881 in response to the anti-Jewish pogroms in the Russian Empire. These organizations were officially constituted as a group at a conference led by

Leon Pinsker in 1884, and they are now considered to be the forerunners and foundation-builders of modern Zionism. Many of the first groups were established in Eastern Europe countries in the early 1880s, with the aims of promoting Jewish immigration to *Eretz Yisrael* and advancing Jewish settlement – particularly agricultural – in *Eretz Yisrael*.

**** **The World Zionist Organization** was founded as the **Zionist Organization**, or **ZO**, in 1897 during the first Zionist Congress (held from August 29 to August 31 in Basel, Switzerland). It changed its name to the *World Zionist Organization* in January 1960. Membership in the ZO was open to all Jews and the right to vote for delegates to the congresses was secured by the purchase of the Zionist Shekel. Delegations from around the world, and from many different political backgrounds and religious traditions, took part in each Congress. The delegations and parties were mainly grouped by ideology, rather than by geography.

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BIBLIOTEKI W IZRAELU

SŁOWA KLUCZOWE: Biblioteka Narodowa. Biblioteki uniwersyteckie. Biblioteki publiczne. Biblioteki szkolne. Biblioteki w Izraelu.

ABSTRAKT: **Teza/Cel** – W artykule przedstawiono podstawowe informacje na temat izraelskiego społeczeństwa i kultury, analizując w odniesieniu do nich rozwój bibliotek w Izraelu. Analiza obejmuje różne typy bibliotek: Bibliotekę Narodową, biblioteki uniwersyteckie, publiczne i szkolne zarówno w żydowskich, jak i arabskich sektorach państwa. Ponadto zaprezentowano instytucje edukacji zawodowej, organizacje bibliotekarskie i prowadzące współpracę międzybiblioteczną. **Metody badań** – Przegląd literatury i analiza piśmiennictwa. **Wyniki/wnioski** – W artykule omówiono biblioteki w Izraelu zarówno w okresie proklamowania niepodległego państwa Izrael (omówienie skrótowe, służące jako tło do dalszych analiz) jak i w okresie od proklamowania państwa (1948) do dnia dzisiejszego. Jest to jeden z rozdziałów w historii Żydów izraelskich, walczących o ustanowienie instytucji edukacyjnych i kulturalnych już przed uzyskaniem niepodległości, a niewątpliwie od momentu jej uzyskania.